

JOHN CAGE'S 4'33": THE RPG

by Jess Gulbranson

Cage is one of modern music's most influential composers, known for challenging compositions using nontraditional methods and aleatoric elements. *4'33"* is his most famous and divisive piece. *John Cage's 4'33": THE RPG* is a transformative composition for d20 (or compatible systems) that reframes the aleatoric foundation of standard TTRPG play into a performance of the most recognizable avant-garde composition in history.

SETUP

JC433RPG can be performed solo, but the richest experience is had with a DM (taking the role of conductor), an NPC/monster director, and 4-6 players, as well as an audience. Battlemaps are not necessary. Before performance, the DM should create a list of monsters from any random encounter table.

PLAY

Begin by settling initiative for all entities. Play proceeds in initiative order, with all PCs and monsters taking *no action*, in turn, for 45 full combat rounds, ending with one half combat round, during which only swift actions may not be taken.

NOTE:

It is widely and incorrectly assumed that in the game world 4'33" of *nothing* takes place, but it is in fact a duration of inaction and ambient occurrence, so environmental factors such as traps, volcanos, etc. may be organically included in the performance.